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FM AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4932
INFO RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 3971
RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 2418
RUEHB/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 1490
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0904
RUEHC/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 2093
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 6179
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 4401
RUEHQ/AMEMBASSY QUITO 2364
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
RUCPDOC/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC

UNCLAS SANTIAGO 000450

SIPDIS

STATE FOR R/MR, I/PP, WHA/BSC, WHA/PDA, INR/IAA

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TAGS: KMDR KPAO PGOV ECON PREL SNAR EFIN CI

SUBJECT: CHILE MEDIA REPORT - MAY 12

Leading Story

¶1. Former cabinet member, Ambassador, and strong opponent to the military regime -- Claudio Huepe (DC party) -- died yesterday from a heart attack in Venezuela.

U.S.-Related News

¶2. PA release: Ambassador Paul Simons will attend the 50th anniversary commemoration of the Torres del Paine Park in Punta Arenas, in southern Chile. Simons will also deliver remarks at the University of Magallanes on, "The First 100 day of the Obama Administration: A New U.S. Commitment for the 21st Century" (Radios Magallanes, Polar, and Natales webpages, 5/11).

¶3. The Chicago Foundation will award the Mayor of Penalolen, Claudio Orrego, the distinction "Emerging Latin American Leader 2009" (La Segunda, conservative, afternoon, circ. 33,000, 5/11).

¶4. An American surgeon William Hill and his Chilean wife were assaulted by a man hiding in the closet of their home in Linares, southern Chile. Hill confronted the assailant and ended with a knife wound on his hand (El Mercurio, conservative, influential newspaper-of-record, circ. 129,000, 5/12).

¶5. "Laughter and Authority"

"In Chile the concept of authority is associated to being serious and our officials are not too keen on joking or improvising.... But in other places it seems that humor is not just welcome, but also praised. For example, in the annual dinner for White House correspondents, Obama laughed at himself and at his first 100 days.... This is a healthy democratic exercise... that does not undermine the President's authority.... Those who laugh at themselves are sure of their abilities; Chilean politicians don't do this, so you can draw your own conclusion." (Article by staff writer with PGA acronym, La Tercera, conservative, independent, circ. 101,000, 5/12).

Next UNASUR Meeting in July

¶6. Foreign Affairs Minister Mariano Fernandez announced that the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) will meet in Santiago, July 7-8. President Bachelet will turn over the institution's pro tempore chairmanship to President Rafael Correa of Ecuador at that meeting. Hugo Chavez, who will have just concluded an official visit to Chile, is likely to attend the summit. Fernandez defended ties with Venezuela, noting: "Chile cannot work without taking into

account an important political actor in South America, such as Venezuela" (*La Segunda*, 5/11).

SIMONS